

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN NEW YORK CITY
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1920.

A Committee meeting was held in the office of McKim, Mead and White, 101 Park Avenue, New York City, on Saturday, November 20, 1920.

There were present:

Mr. Moore, Chairman;
Mr. Platt;
Mr. Kendall;
Mr. Greenleaf;
Mr. Fraser;

also Major C. S. Ridley, Secretary and Executive Officer.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m.

1. MEADE MEMORIAL: Major Ridley brought to the attention of the Committee a revised design submitted by Simon and Simon, architects, of the ground plan and plaza for the Meade Memorial and a new design for the benches. It was shown that the plan adopted for this square in which the Meade Memorial will be located will be a type of square for the entire Mall. The Committee decided to make an inspection of the ground with a view to deciding upon type of pavement. The architects have been advised as to the changes to be made in the design. (Exhibit A).

Mr. Greenleaf called attention to the excessive crowning of the grass panels of the Mall, as shown by the map contours. In his judgment the contours should be much flattened or straightened out so as to avoid a pillow effect between the walks and drives.

Major Ridley advised that the present plan has been followed out in Seaton Park and that time would show whether a change would be desirable. Mr. Moore suggested that the Meade Memorial Commission give consideration to the treatment of the triangle adjoining Union Square to the north on Pennsylvania

Avenue, which the Committee endorsed.

2. KEY MEMORIAL: Mr. Niehaus submitted a lighting scheme for the Key Memorial showing ten lamp posts, measuring eighteen feet in length, with thirteen stars or globes, and a large globe at the top. Mr. Niehaus said the design is only a suggestion and that the contract does not require him to put in the lighting scheme, however, he would like to see the Key Memorial well lighted. Mr. Niehaus advised that the statue itself will measure twenty-five feet and six inches, and that the entire statue will be from forty-two to forty-three feet high. Mr. Platt suggested the suitability of two high lights instead of the series of lamp posts. The Committee took the matter under advisement and Mr. Niehaus is to be advised later of the recommendation of the Commission in this matter.

3. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY: Mr. Moore reported having received the following letter from the Secretary of War setting forth his approval of the recommendations of the Commission in regard to the development of Arlington National Cemetery:

"I am in receipt of your communication of the 4th instant inclosing a copy of a letter to General Rogers concerning certain conclusions reached in regard to the development of Arlington National Cemetery, as a result of consultation between the Commission of Fine Arts and his office, and pointing out the necessity for adequate appropriations for enlarging, planting and maintaining the cemetery.

In reply, I beg to state that I am in full accord with the views expressed in your letter and the Department will endeavor to carry them out. The question will be taken up with a view to obtaining adequate appropriations by Congress for the development of Arlington along the lines suggested."

4. LINCOLN MEMORIAL REFLECTING POOL: The Committee took into consideration the question of extending the pool to the original platform. Major Ridley reported that there was sufficient water in the pool as a result of the recent rain so as to reflect the entire Washington Monument. Major Ridley advised

that the tip of the Monument could not be seen from the Lincoln Memorial steps but it was his opinion after making inquiry that this was not intended by the Commission in adopting the plan. The matter was taken up in consultation with Mr. Bacon, and the extension approved. (Exhibit B).

5. ROSTRUM, GEORGIA AVENUE NATIONAL CEMETERY: Mr. Kendall reported that he has given consideration to the design for a proposed rostrum to be located at the Georgia Avenue National Cemetery, for which Congress has appropriated about \$2,500, and will submit a report to the Commission in regard to the matter.

6. R.O.T.C. INSIGNIA: Mr. Fraser submitted a design for the insignia of the Reserve Officers Training Corps, which was approved subject to a slight change in the composition at the end of the bar. The insignia is to be pinned on the front of a cap.

7. PIERCE MILL, ROCK CREEK PARK: Major Ridley submitted a preliminary sketch for the ground of Pierce Mill showing suggested changes for the improvement of the area. The essential changes pertain to walks, bridle paths, roadways; to parking space for automobiles; a place for tables; and certain rearrangements in the building. (Exhibit C). The Committee advised that there should not be too many changes made about Pierce Mill as they might spoil the scenic effect of the old Mill. The Committee decided to make an inspection on the grounds in considering further details of the plans.

8. VERDUN MEDAL: At the request of one of the sculptors the Committee decided that each competitor will be allowed to submit two models for the Verdun Medal, and they are to be advised accordingly by letter through the War Department.

9. GRADING PLAN ALONG BOATING CHANNEL, EAST POTOMAC PARK: The Committee approved the grading plan and profile for the area to the north of the proposed boating channel at East Potomac Park which is to connect the Washington Channel and the Potomac River.

10. GOLF COURSE AND PICNIC GROVE, EAST POTOMAC PARK: In regard to the Double Flowering Japanese Cherry Trees along the Speedway in East Potomac Park, the Committee approved the general plan of broadening the belt of Cherry Trees along the driveway by moving back enough trees to avoid interference with each other, still, however, retaining the grouping instead of making a continuous belt.

This approval was made with the understanding that the remaining area between the proposed arrangement of the Japanese Cherry Trees and the Golf Course outlined was to be redesigned, using various tree species to be decided on later.

Major Ridley advised that it has been urged by players on the Golf Course that instead of deciduous trees, evergreen trees be adopted for the grounds, since the fallen leaves interfere in playing golf. A ball is frequently lost among the leaves and it interrupts the playing. Mr. Greenleaf advised that this would affect the landscape scene, but in the interests of good playing he would favor a suitable type of evergreen. Major Ridley is to submit a plan of evergreen planting.

The Committee adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Approved:

December 2, 1920.

Dear Sirs:

I received your letter of the 17th ultimo, together with sketches for the plaza and the benches of the Meade Memorial, and brought it to the attention of the members of the Commission of Fine Arts at their meeting on November 20th.

The Commission suggests the following changes in the plan:

1. That the wide granite curbing, as shown on the 1" scale section and marked in red "G", be used only surrounding the square in which the statue is placed.
2. That beginning at the walks leading from the square the section be changed to a piece of granite about 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$ " wide and raised not more than $\frac{3}{4}$ " higher than the regular paving. This curbing, marked "A" on the plan returned, should surround the entire grass plot.
3. That the 15 ft. walks running east and west from the monument should be restricted to that width, except where they start from the monument square, in which case a break may be made of the same width as the walks going north and south. This is suggested on the plan in red. No benches to be placed on these walks; their surface to be determined later. As these walks will run through the entire mall, the Commission is studying this matter and will communicate with you later as to its decision.
4. That the Commission disapproves your revised design for the benches and recommends the adoption of something similar to the enclosed design.

5. The Commission suggests that the benches on the two short walks leading north and south be placed nearer the curb so as to leave the vista from the street to the central motif clearer.

6. Please note that on the long walk between "A" and "C" there is a 5 foot grass space between the curb and the 15 ft. sidewalk.

The Commission requests a resubmission of the designs.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) C. S. Ridley,

Major, Corps of Engineers,

Secretary and Executive Officer.

Messrs. Simon and Simon,
249 South Juniper Street,
Philadelphia, Pa.

EXHIBIT A.

December 7, 1920.

Dear Major Ridley:

At a meeting held on November 29, 1920, the members of the Commission of Fine Arts gave consideration to the question of having the west end of the lagoon of the Lincoln Memorial extended to the original platform, and the Commission hereby approve the extension, as shown in yellow on the attached blueprint, so that the west edge of the coping will be moved westward 20.5 feet and will be 55 feet east of the bottom step of the approaches.

Sincerely, yours,

(signed) Charles Moore

Chairman.

Major C. S. Ridley,

Corps of Engineers,

Officer in Charge of
Public Buildings and Grounds.

EXHIBIT B.

REPORT OF PRELIMINARY SKETCH PLAN FOR GROUNDS OF PIERCE MILL -
ROCK CREEK PARK.

The following report is based, in the main, on the previous report submitted by the Rock Creek Park Advisory Board on April 22, 1919. With certain minor changes, mainly the possibility of omitting the installation of the old mill wheel due to limited available funds, the plan described does not embody any fundamental changes with the exception of the proposed terrace to the southeast of the old mill.

The plan itself is based on the imposed environmental site conditions of the grounds and the use to which this area and building are to be put, which is the reason for the informal treatment throughout the major portion of the grounds. A further reason for the informal treatment is the greater ease of rearrangement of the grounds, not only from an aesthetic standpoint but also from a financial basis. Since the setting is informal in its present condition, it is felt that any rearrangement ought to recognize, as fundamental, the intrinsic charm of the naturalesque in its future developments, so that its present distinct features may be preserved and accentuated.

From an examination of the plan submitted, it will be seen that this ideal has governed the design as a whole, the setting apart of the service area, such as the parking spaces, comfort stations, and horse tether yard, from the more intimate pleasure area immediately surrounding the old mill where nothing intrudes to offend the senses. It is still further felt that the arrangement of gently rolling lawn, fine old trees, choice shrubbery, numerous vistas of water, rocks and foliage, together with the added charm of falling water more than offset any effect which could be produced by the doubtful addition or revision of an arrangement which would introduce any feature of a formal character, such as the use of terraces, retaining walls, or similar formal features.

APPROACH: The approach by road from any direction is natural, the curves having sufficient "spring" to allow of a feeling of ease in movement calculated to increase the safety in approach particularly that of the entrance to the Old Mill from Pierce Mill Road in each direction. The imposed restricted entrance area has made it necessary that pedestrian and vehicular traffic be taken from the main approach roads, as shown, to reduce to a minimum the danger of any congestion along the approach from the intersecting roads. Particularly is this true of the pedestrian traffic, which is mainly applicable to the approach from the bridge across Rock Creek. This is solved as shown by an approach to the northwest of the bridge by way of a series of gently descending, informal field stone steps leading across an existing riverlet and thence up to the old mill.

The bridle path approach is solved by revising the present approach so that it enters the intersecting roads to the southwest of the present location and thence along the west side of Pierce Mill Road past the comfort station and parking area which is a logical revision of the present plan, since it takes the equestrian traffic away from the main roads as soon as possible and allows a right angle crossing of the road northwest of the meadow, at the same time permitting the riders to tether their mounts in the tether yard, a normally convenient location.

MOTOR PARKING: Motorists desiring to park their machines, first discharge their occupants at the entrance of the Old Mill and then continue on to the entrance of the auto park where twenty-one cars may be accommodated without crowding. Any overflow may be accommodated along the east side of Pierce Mill Road adjacent to the "grounds proper". Should future development require additional space, such may be secured in the area shown south of the proposed comfort station.

WATER WHEEL RESTORATION: Possible future water-wheel restoration may be installed at the location indicated on the northeast side of the Mill, water being led from the Creek through a twenty inch pipe into an informal pool, having two outlets, one an eighteen inch overflow pipe and the other a fifteen inch pipe to supply water for the mill wheel. All overflow water from the wheel is to go under an arched series of steps, leading down from the east terrace of the old mill and thence on to the main stream.

WALKS: All walks, west of the entrance, are designed to be of stone slabs set in cement or grass. The remaining walks inside the proposed stone wall, excepting the entrance terrace, would be of gravel.

STONE WALLS: All stone walls would be of stone similar in color and kind, if possible, to that of the old mill and approximately three to three and one-half feet in height, with "dry-raked" joints of one and one-half to two inch reveal with piers as shown.

EXPENSE OF REGRADING: It is believed that the relatively slight amount of regrading necessary about the parking area, north of the proposed comfort station, is justified inasmuch as this area is most suitable for parking judged by reason of its accessibility and quickness with which machines are taken from the main line of traffic, and further because the soil excavated will be needed to regrade properly the area about the old mill and thus avoid the introduction of needless retaining walls, terraces and similar features.

VISTAS: Vistas have been preserved and accentuated by the use of trees and shrubbery so as to emphasize the inherent beauty of the present existing features, and aiming to secure a succession of glimpses wherever possible.

(signed) Irving W. Payne,
Landscape Architect.

November 19, 1920.

EXHIBIT C.

